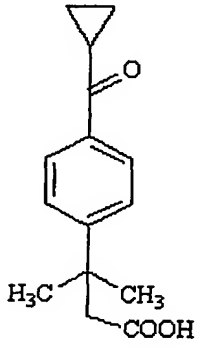
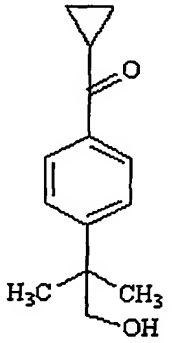
WE CLAIM:

1. A process for the preparation of cyclopropyl keto α, α -dimethylphenyl acetic acid of Formula I,



FORMULA I

the process comprising treating 4-(cyclopropyloxomethyl)-2,2-dimethylphenethyl alcohol of Formula III,



FORMULA III

with a hydroxide of an alkali metal; adding oxidizing agent followed by aqueous acidic work up; and isolating the cyclopropyl keto α, α-dimethylphenyl acetic acid.

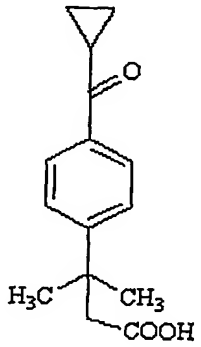
2. The process of claim 1, wherein the hydroxide of an alkali metal is lithium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, and potassium hydroxide.

3. The process of claim 2, wherein the hydroxide of an alkali metal is sodium hydroxide.

4. The process of claim 1, wherein the oxidizing agent is potassium permanganate.

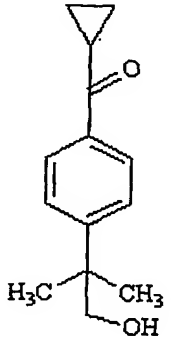
5. The process of claim 1, wherein the oxidizing agent is added in small lots.

6. A process for the preparation of cyclopropyl keto α, α-dimethylphenyl acetic acid of Formula I,



FORMULA I

the process comprising treating 4-(cyclopropyloxomethyl)-2,2-dimethylphenethyl alcohol of Formula III,



FORMULA III

with a hydroxide of an alkali metal; adding oxidizing agent; adding organic solvent followed by aqueous acidic work up; and isolating the cyclopropyl keto α, α-dimethylphenyl acetic acid.

7. The process of claim 6, wherein the hydroxide of an alkali metal is lithium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, and potassium hydroxide.

8. The process of claim 7, wherein the hydroxide of an alkali metal is sodium hydroxide.

9. The process of claim 6, wherein the oxidizing agent is potassium permanganate.

10. The process of claim 6, wherein the oxidizing agent is added in small lots.

11. The process of claim 6, wherein the organic solvent comprises one or more of chlorinated hydrocarbon, ketone, or mixtures thereof.

12. The process of claim 11, wherein the ketone comprises one or more of acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, and methyl isobutyl ketone.

13. The process of claim 12, wherein the ketone is acetone.

14. The process of claim 11, wherein the chlorinated hydrocarbon comprises one or more of dichloromethane, chloroform, and 1,2-dichloroethane.

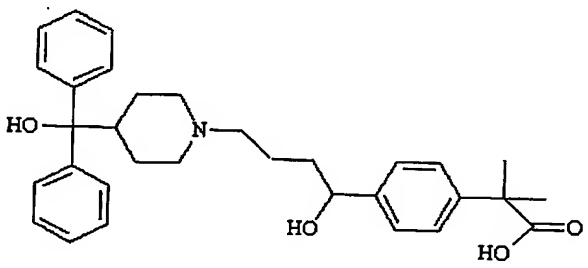
15. The process of claim 6, further comprising removing precipitated inorganic solids after adding organic solvent.

16. The process of claim 15, wherein the inorganic solids are removed by filtration.

17. The process of claim 16, further comprising washing filtrate with one or more of a chlorinated solvent after removal of the inorganic solids.

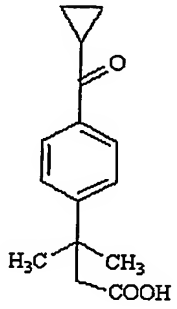
18. The process of claim 17, wherein the chlorinated hydrocarbon comprises one or more of dichloromethane, chloroform, and 1,2-dichloroethane.

19. A process for the preparation of fexofenadine of Formula II or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,



FORMULA II

the process comprising hydrolyzing the cyclopropyl keto α, α-dimethylphenyl acetic acid of Formula I prepared by the process of claim 1 or 6, condensing with



FORMULA I

azacyclonol, and reducing.

20. A method of treating allergic reactions in a patient in need thereof, the method comprising providing a dosage form to said patient that includes fexofenadine hydrochloride prepared by the process of claim 19.